(b) the number of cases filed and disposed of during the last three' years; and

(c) the amount paid as salary, daily allowance and travelling allowances to the District Forum and State Commission during the period 2000-2001 and 2001-2002?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) As reported by the Government of Pondicherry, 37 cases and 22 cases were pending before the State Commission and District Forum respectively as on 30.4.2002.

(b) Government of Pondicherry has reported that during the last three years, 151 cases were filed before the State Commission and 166 cases were disposed of by the State Commission. Similarly, 373 cases were filed in the District Forum and 391 cases were disposed of by the District Forum.

(c) As per the information furnished by the Government of Pondicherry, during the year 2000-2001, Rs. 2,58,69/- and Rs. 46,630/- have been paid for salaries, honorarium and allowances for the District Forum and the State Commission, respectively.

During the year 2001-2002, Rs. 4,16,546/- and Rs. 2,16,764/-have been paid for salaries, honorarium and allowances for the District Forum and the State Commission, respectively.

Distress sale of Paddy and Wheat

4563. SHRI CP. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite farmers have been given minimum support price for their produce, the cases of distress sale paddy and wheat been reported from various States;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the FCI is adopting uniform policy of procurement throughout the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Reports about alleged distress sale of wheat and paddy have been received during the Rabi and Kharif Marketing Seasons, 2001-2002, from some States. However, investigations have revealed that only foodgrains not conforming to the specifications laid down were sold below the Minimum Support Price (M.S.P.).

(c) to (e) Food Corporation of India (FCI), alongwith the State Governments and their agencies, undertakes procurement of foodgrains conforming to Fair Average Quality (F.A.Q.) Specifications at Minimum Support Prices (M.S.P.) at specified centres for the Central pool. FCI also collect rice by way statutory levy on rice millers/dealers. The procurement in a State depends upon (I) the capacity of the F.C.I, and the State Government and its agencies and (ii) the infrastructure available.

In order to ensure, *inter alia,* that the benefit of MSP scheme reaches the farmers, the Government had, in 1997-98, introduced the scheme of Decentralised Procurement. This scheme is now in operation in three States, namely, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Efforts are being made to encourage other States to adopted the scheme.

Reimbursement of transportation charges

4564. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reimbursed the transportation charges for the levy sugar nominees, particularly in Saurashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and